

of his own results. The explicit theoretical contribution could be greater. The limitations of the "penetration paradigm" as an explanation for the process of development in China, could have been related to the general theoretical problems of the dependency theory. At the same time, Osterhammel provides sufficient arguments to counter the assertion of modernisation theorists that foreign activities were basically positive. Finally, there is lack of explanation why, despite an initially strong position, Britain sought cooperation with the Chinese Government and finally became an essential support to it, while Japan moved from an initially much weaker position to a policy of rigid confrontation ending in open war. Reference to the political and economic decline of British imperialism, and to the parallel upsurge of Japanese imperialism would have been appropriate here.

Despite these reservations, which really concern the on-going debate, Osterhammel has presented a very readable piece of research, that is of a very high standard in many respects. He has made an important contribution to empirical and theoretical discussion on the development of China.

Ulrich Menzel

FRANZ JOSEF HEEG: *Phänomen Japan - Japanische Organisationsformen und ihre Übertragbarkeit auf deutsche Unternehmen*. Köln: Deutscher Wirtschaftsdienst, 1983. 248 pages, DM 47.-

In view of the enormous achievements the Japanese economy has made in the last 20 years - the "Japanese Phenomenon" - this book offers a survey of the social and economic circumstances of present-day Japan. To explain why Japan has been so successful the author first refers to the three phases of Japan's industrial development, highlighting the last phase (from 1945 to the present day) and the dual structure Japan's economy has today. Other important aspects are presented, such as the relation between state and economy, employment pattern, growth factors, domestic and foreign demand, educational system and the Japanese worker. In this context comparison with Western models can provide particularly valuable information. Many individual aspects seem to be - at least at first sight - applicable to Western companies. Other aspects can appear to the individual observer - depending on his point of view - either desirable or not useful, e.g. strong interlocking between state and economy ("Japan Incorporated"), large-scale financing of research and development by industry, the marked stress put on industrial education etc. Nevertheless, this book also shows the undoubted limits of such applicability, considering first of all the differences in cultural development between Europe and Japan.

An important feature in this respect is the Japanese's attitude towards his

firm. A secondary school graduate already decides not for his job, but for his future company. Such far-reaching commitment and identification would be unthinkable to a present-day German. The cultural and religious background of the Japanese, especially the influence of Zen Buddhism and above all the Confucian state ideology on the Japanese mind may explain some of these aspects.

Besides, detailed facts are provided on the "inside" of Japanese firms. It is particularly interesting to learn how decisions are made in Japanese firms compared with Western companies and what processes take place at the individual levels. Even in decision-making the major guideline for a Japanese is the benefit of his company.

Heeg gives an instructive and detailed description of the principles of structure and flow organization customary in Japan. The Kanban system which has so often been mentioned in Western publications in recent years as well as methods like quality circles and value analysis many Japanese companies consistently apply, are also presented besides many other methods. Moreover, the future strategies of Japanese industry are described. Japanese economic planning is focused on the fields of mechanical engineering, computers, nuclear energy, information technologies, ocean exploration, bio-industries as well as aerospace industry as the growth industries of tomorrow and is therefore greatly intensifying its R. and D. activities on these sectors.

That is why these fields will see even stronger competition between the Western industrialized countries and Japan on the international markets in the next years; one reason more for gaining information on the principles the Japanese apply. The author, however, underlines that it is not his intention to create a "Japanism" which might serve as a substitute for the present West German situation, where a large number of people, especially executives in economy and administration and scientists, tend much more to adopt innovations and views from the U.S. rather than those that were developed originally in Germany.

According to Heeg, the direct application of principles successful in Japan to German conditions should be avoided. The Japanese success should rather serve as a cause for the German economist to analyse the possibilities of increasing the efficiency of his company. In doing so the Japanese ideas should be taken into consideration, but, from the author's point of view, an uncritical adaptation is pointless. Besides presenting the possibilities of "learning from the Japanese", the "Japanese System" is also rather sharply criticised, whereby such phrases as "the total work nation" appear and the question: "what is humanity?" is asked. Thus, the limits of such learning are clearly shown.

In the second half of his book dealing mainly with the West German situation Heeg emphasizes that precisely in this country (with its background of many centuries of Christian tradition in the Occident and of several decades of democratic tradition) such principles should be applied as expressed in methods like the Ringi system or the quality circles, i.e. involving staff in

company decision processes.

For this purpose, however, certain requirements must be fulfilled which the author explains in detail. In brief, for example, employers should be willing to practise a cooperative management style, to make delegation and sufficient information of staff a rule in everyday company life and to grant the individual staff members an appropriate scope for decision corresponding to their experience and knowledge. Staff members should be prepared to make full use of this scope and to commit themselves to the cause of the company - if necessary - even beyond the "usual" degree. The formal means for meeting such requirements, such as Management by Objectives, Organization Development are specified besides the quality circles.

This book may therefore serve not only those who are interested in the Japanese economy, but can also be useful to German company executives who want to face the requirements of today's complex and dynamic environment and increase the efficiency of their companies or their industry or to those who must rely on higher efficiency because of growing competition and a worsening economic situation. Finally, this work may also be of help to those who want to do business in Japan, for Heeg not only describes Japanese work and management principles, but also considers the question of what has to be borne in mind when joining partnership with a Japanese firm or entering the Japanese market.

Rolf Hackstein

REINHARD NEUMANN: *Änderung und Wandlung der Japanischen Verfassung.* (Schriftenreihe Japanisches Recht, Bd.12). Köln, Berlin, Bonn, München: Carl Heymanns Verlag, 1982. 239 pages, DM 68.-

The subject of this instructive treatise is the problem whether the material content of the formally unrevised Japanese constitution of 1946 has changed. Events on the political scene, scientific research and discussions, judgements of the courts and demands of political groups have severely harassed the constitution in the past decades. Therefore, from the beginning, the discussion centred - and still does - around the question whether life under the constitution is in accordance with the terms of the same and if the interpretation of the constitution, by being altered, can take the reality as constitutional.

The author rightly describes the Japanese constitution as a rigid one: under art.96 its revision is bound to requirements which, in the political circumstances, could hitherto not be fulfilled although the development of the nation has in more than one point raised the question of constitutionality.

The author depicts the course of the discussion about revision which has